

was here and after that, Tommy Manton always made it clear that he understood fully what it meant to be a New Yorker and the history of New York City. He would sit down and talk to me and say, You know, my dad used to tell me about how the Irish wanted to participate in politics. And he said, I know folks will tell you about the struggles from members of the Jewish community to participate in politics and members of the Italian American community to participate in politics. And he said, It is no different. In Queens and New York City and in this country, there are Asians and Hispanics, and much earlier, African Americans who want to participate in politics, not with a desire to uproot the leadership or to destroy anything but to be part of it. And he understood from the first day I met him, he knew the first time I spoke to him, that this was healthy for our party, and it was even healthier for our society.

It has been said here that he gave sort of a rough impression at times. Very direct. Not too many words. But he was always finding a way of bringing about change. When you look at his history, the fact that he was a New York City policeman, the fact that he goes to law school, the fact that he runs for public office and wins, it is a career that tells you that there is dedication and there is concern. And I remember when he sat down with me one day and he said, Queens is seen by many folks as sort of a politically forgotten borough. We have got a lot of numbers, but all the action that is New York City is happening elsewhere. And he said, Watch Queens in the next few years as it begins to include people.

And I think that is important to use the word "include" and "inclusion" because Tommy Manton was not about meaningless tokenism. He was about honestly bringing people in.

And so now because of Tommy Manton, the Asian community, the Hispanic community, the African American community, and a county that not long ago people would bet would never see that kind of inclusiveness and that kind of change, now you see the change and you see the inclusion of people where Asian Americans had been elected in Queens County before they were elected anywhere else. Where an African American woman was elected as the borough president, chief executive of the county. That is Tommy Manton's legacy.

And depending on what your take on life is, and part of mine is that the only thing that still hurts our country is the inability for all folks to get along, that everything else we can deal with, all other issues we can deal with, but the lack of unity at times haunts us, then what better legacy to have been a leader who understood that people had to be included, and people had to be part of the process.

□ 2045

If nothing else is said about what Tom Manton accomplished, let it be

said that he understood that everybody had to be at the table and everybody had to share.

After he left here, he kept in touch with me, and after he left here we spoke often. But I will always remember him as a straight-shooter, a class act, a nice human being of few words and a coalition builder.

Mr. RANGEL and I have discussed this many times. I have only one prerequisite when supporting a political candidate: Are they a coalition builder? If they are not, including members of my own community, then I am not supporting them. That is what Tommy Manton was. That is why we will miss him, and that is why our thoughts and our prayers are with his family and with the whole Queens community.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS J. MANTON

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). Without objection, the gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, the members of the New York delegation have risen today with great sadness and with great pride in the life and service and leadership of our former colleague, Tom Manton.

When Mr. RANGEL announced to the body earlier this evening the sad news of Mr. Manton's passing, which, of course, has been heralded in the press because he was a big figure in New York, it brought back many memories for those of us who served with him. A big, strong Democrat, he served with great pride in this body as a way to serve the people of his district, which he loved and took great pride in. He worked in a very bipartisan way to get the job done for them. I had been a former Chair of the California Democratic Party over 20 years ago, so we shared that commitment to removing obstacles of participation in the political process through the Democratic Party organization which he led with great pride for so much of his political life.

His policy contributions for his district are legendary, and that is why he was unbeatable until he just decided he wasn't going to run again, and we all know of the legacy that he sent us in the great service of Mr. CROWLEY in the Congress.

Every person in America who cares about the environment in our country owes Mr. Manton a debt of gratitude. During seven terms in Congress, Mr. Manton was an important figure on the reauthorization of the Superfund program, which promotes the cleanup of uncontrolled and abandoned hazardous waste sites. It is very, very important pioneer work that he did there.

It might be of interest to some to know that when he came to Congress, he came to replace Geraldine Ferraro,

who was designated to be the Vice Presidential candidate. So there is a proud tradition from this district for many years; and that tradition, of course, continues with Mr. CROWLEY.

Tommy Manton was a proud Democrat and a proud Irishman, in his personal life as well as his public service. He did a great deal as the cochairman of the Congressional Ad Hoc Committee on Irish Affairs. He helped persuade President Clinton to meet with Gerry Adams, the president of the Sinn Fein, the political arm of the Irish Republican Army. That was really a step forward in bridge building, trying to find solutions and getting the job done.

He served as a flight navigator in the Marine Corps. He was, again, a very patriotic American, who served our country in so many arenas, in local government, in the Congress of the United States, as a Marine, as a community leader, and in the Democratic Party.

On behalf of all of the Democrats, I know everyone in the Congress extends their deepest sympathy to his family, of whom I know he was very, very proud; to Diane, his wife, his widow now, and to their children, Cathy, Thomas, Jr., John and Jeanne. I hope it is a comfort to you that so many people mourn your loss and are praying for you at this sad time, and that it is a comfort to you that these New Yorkers take such pride in the life, leadership and service of Tom Manton, who himself was a proud New Yorker, a proud Irishman, a proud American.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS J. MANTON AND ARGUMENT FOR RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS J. MANTON

Mr. OWENS. Madam Speaker, I would like to add my sentiments to the words that have been spoken already. I associate myself with the remarks that have been made about Tom Manton.

Tom Manton was a political leader in an adjacent county, the Borough of Queens. In the Borough of Brooklyn we had what we call a first-rate political machine, and in view of the fact we have been discussing power-sharing and the Voting Rights Act, I remember dramatically seeing the difference between Brooklyn and Queens.

As a leader in Queens, Tom Manton believed in power-sharing. Minorities did not have to fight to get what they deserved in Queens. Harmony was not established only after a big battle was waged and the spoils were settled. In Brooklyn we had to battle for everything. We had to fight all the way.

Tom Manton was a political boss. He was head of a machine. But he gave new meaning to the word machine and being a boss. A conciliator, a mediator, a guy who made things happen as he took this diverse, rapidly growing borough, rapidly growing in terms of diverse population, he wove it altogether

without bitter fights and without leaving a lot of blood in the aisles.

So I take my hat off to Tom Manton and the kind of example he made. I can add very little to what my colleagues have already said.

ARGUMENT FOR RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

Madam Speaker, I wanted to speak tonight about a subject we have been talking about for quite a while here, and that is raising the minimum wage.

I also know that almost nothing new can be said about the need for an increase in the minimum wage. My colleagues have been on the floor for the last 2 weeks hammering away at the subject. The facts surrounding this gross injustice have been recited again and again.

I am a cosponsor of a simple legislative vehicle which will raise the minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.15 an hour. Our ranking member of the Education and the Workforce Committee, GEORGE MILLER, has already used every known legislative and publicity maneuver known to man to confront the majority Republicans with a need to place this issue on the floor for a vote. The 30-something Group has done a fantastic job with charts and graphs, making it crystal clear how ridiculous it is that we have not raised the minimum wage since 1997. I can't add much to that.

Madam Speaker, I want to address this subject from a different perspective. I want to talk about the fact that the people earning minimum wage at the very bottom are the people that we need in this society. We need everybody to be in a position where they can rise in this society, and a decent income for a family is the beginning of the process of moving toward the middle class.

"Middle-class" covers a whole lot of things, but I am going to oversimplify the matter and say it is generally felt what makes the world go around economically and politically is a middle class. Every nation needs a middle class.

There has been a lot of talk about the fact that in China in the next 10 years, 25 percent of its population will be middle class. What is 25 percent of China's population of 1.2 billion? It is 300 million people that will be in the Chinese middle class. About the same number of people will move into the middle class in India in 10 years, 300 million.

Now, what is the population of the United States? Our total population is 300 million. If we are going to compete with China and India, the middle class is a competitive class. That is the educated class. That is the people that have technical proficiency to compete with us in the high-tech area. They are doing it and will do more of it. In addition to China and India, you have Russia and a number of other places in Europe that will have middle-class folks to be in that competitive arena.

We need every American to be competitive. We have only got 300 million. Our goal should be to make every

American a part of the middle class, because middle class, as I said before, means the productive class, the people who can make a contribution toward our society, who can take care of themselves and help take care of various functions in our society.

At every level we need excellence, better educated people. I am talking about from the guy who pours the concrete to the engineer who designs the tunnels and bridges. We need competence, we need people who are constantly raising the level and moving toward excellence.

Blunders in our society internally may destroy us faster than any outside enemy, blunders by people who are not competent, blunders because we run out of talent, because we run out of people who know what they are doing, or we run out of a competitive situation where there are enough people in a given area to be able to chastise, examine, criticize and keep other people in line. We had such a major blunder in the building of the levees in New Orleans.

Madam Speaker, I will submit an article for the RECORD from the New York Times by Paul Krugman entitled "Black and Blue," which is in regards to the minimum wage.

[From the New York Times, July 24, 2006]

BLACK AND BLUE

(By Paul Krugman)

According to the White House transcript, here's how it went last week, when President Bush addressed the N.A.A.C.P. for the first time:

THE PRESIDENT: "I understand that many African-Americans distrust my political party."

AUDIENCE: "Yes! (Applause.)"

But Mr. Bush didn't talk about why African-Americans don't trust his party, and black districts are always blue on election maps. So let me fill in the blanks.

First, G.O.P. policies consistently help those who are already doing extremely well, not those lagging behind—a group that includes the vast majority of African-Americans. And both the relative and absolute economic status of blacks, after improving substantially during the Clinton years, have worsened since 2000.

The G.O.P. obsession with helping the haves and have-mores, and lack of concern for everyone else, was evident even in Mr. Bush's speech to the N.A.A.C.P. Mr. Bush never mentioned wages, which have been falling behind inflation for most workers. And he certainly didn't mention the minimum wage, which disproportionately affects African-American workers, and which he has allowed to fall to its lowest real level since 1955.

Mr. Bush also never used the word "poverty," a condition that afflicts almost one in four blacks.

But he found time to call for repeal of the estate tax, even though African-Americans are more than a thousand times as likely to live below the poverty line as they are to be rich enough to leave a taxable estate.

Economic issues alone, then, partially explain African-American disdain for the G.O.P.

But even more important is the way Republicans win elections.

The problem with policies that favor the economic elite is that by themselves they're not a winning electoral strategy, because

there aren't enough elite voters. So how did the Republicans rise to their current position of political dominance? It's hard to deny that barely concealed appeals to racism, which drove a wedge between blacks and relatively poor whites who share the same economic interests, played a crucial role.

Don't forget that in 1980, the sainted Ronald Reagan began his presidential campaign with a speech on states' rights in Philadelphia, Miss., where three civil rights workers were murdered in 1964.

These days the racist appeals have been toned down; Trent Lott was demoted, though not drummed out of the party, when he declared that if Strom Thurmond's segregationist presidential campaign had succeeded "we wouldn't have had all these problems." Meanwhile, the G.O.P. has found other ways to, obscure its economic elitism. The Bush administration has proved utterly incompetent in fighting terrorists, but it has skillfully exploited the terrorist threat for domestic political gain. And there are also the "values" issues: abortion, stem cells, gay marriage.

But the nasty racial roots of the G.O.P.'s triumph live on in public policy and election strategy.

A revelatory article in yesterday's Boston Globe described how the Bush administration has politicized the Justice Department's civil rights division, "filling the permanent ranks with lawyers who have strong conservative credentials but little experience in civil rights."

Not surprisingly, there has been a shift in priorities: "The division is bringing fewer voting rights and employment cases involving systematic discrimination against African-Americans, and more alleging reverse discrimination against whites and religious discrimination against Christians."

Above all, there's the continuing effort of the G.O.P. to suppress black voting.

The Supreme Court probably wouldn't have been able to put Mr. Bush in the White House in 2000 if the administration of his brother, the governor of Florida, hadn't misidentified large numbers of African-Americans as felons ineligible to vote. In 2004, Ohio's Republican secretary of state tried to impose a ludicrous rule on the paper weight of voter registration applications; last year, Georgia Republicans tried to impose an onerous "voter ID" rule. In each case, the obvious intent was to disenfranchise blacks.

And if the Republicans hold on to the House this fall, it will probably only be because of a redistricting plan in Texas that a panel of Justice Department lawyers unanimously concluded violated the Voting Rights Act—only to be overruled by their politically appointed superiors.

So yes, African-Americans distrust Mr. Bush's party—with good reason.

DEBATING REPUBLICAN TAX POLICY IN A CIVIL MANNER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLEAVER) for joining me here this evening in an important discussion that I think should interest all Members. I am going to talk a little bit about how we got started on this.